

Happiness: Person-Oriented Conception

Leonid Z. Levit

The Centre for Psychological Health and Education, Minsk, Belarus

Email: leolev44@tut.by

Abstract

We develop a person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH), which is based on the ideas of systemic approach. POCH synthesizes eudaimonic and hedonistic traditions in the studies of happiness and subjective well-being. We show that POCH integrates not only several personality theories developed at the beginning-mid XXth century, but also some modern conceptions of eudaimonia. We demonstrate that POCH can be invoked to solve many important problems of modern psychology. Perspectives of our further investigations are also outlined.

Keywords

Eudaimonia; Hedonism; Happiness; System Approach; Personal Uniqueness; Rational Egoism

Eudaimonia and Hedonism: Together and Apart

There exist two major conceptions of happiness studies and two life orientations, eudaimonia (eudaimonism) and hedonism.

Eudaimonic way of living was in detail described by Aristotle [2]. In essence, it assumes that a person develops his/her virtues and potentials in the process of his/her activity.

Contemporary researchers [49, 62] select three key features of eudaimonia: 1) meaningful life, 2) fulfillment of personal potential, and 3) full functioning of the person. Also proven is a positive influence of the eudaimonic way of living (which includes, in particular, intrinsic motivation, autonomous regulation, and mindfulness) on the person's health [48, 49, 50] and the ability to withstand stress.

Hedonistic approach, on the other hand, is based on the study of subjective feelings of pleasure and joy experienced by a person. Contemporary studies [38, 52, 53] have proven that it is impossible to achieve the lasting state of happiness through the pursuit of materialistic pleasures. According to the principle of adaptation, all pleasures devaluate rapidly and become less attractive. However, hedonism is rooted into consumerism, which promises more pleasures if we consume more.

As a matter of fact, unlimited consumption results in adaptation to the formerly positive experiences. Gradually, it also causes vulnerability to negative stimuli and makes a person psychologically disarmed. That manifests itself through the growth of depressions and panic attacks in the developed countries [37, 30]. Importantly, the abovementioned disorders are characterized by *negative* emotional states. On the other hand, *infrequent* material and sensual pleasures do enhance personal well-being, since no adaptation occurs [53].

Both eudaimonia and hedonism appeared almost simultaneously. However, their opposing each other continues nowadays. It results in two different approaches to life and happiness apprehension. Under certain conditions, eudaimonia and hedonism are, however, closely connected.

Waterman et al showed that about 80% of eudaimonic activities do contain a considerable share of hedonistic pleasures [62]. As a rule, hedonic and eudaimonic components coexist in happy people. Again we face 80% coincidence [24]. Deci and Ryan also mention the strong correlation between hedonic enjoyment and eudaimonic way of living [49]. Recent studies have revealed that the eudaimonic orientation is stronger connected with well-being and satisfaction than the hedonic orientation [36]. At the same time, the scientists acknowledge the important points of divergence between eudaimonia and hedonism. For example, a person can achieve positive emotions by simpler means, e. g., through consumerism.

Thus, eudaimonic way of living usually allows people to experience hedonistic pleasures as well. Important is that eudaimonic lifestyle is chosen for its own sake: Individual virtues and personal uniqueness, which manifest themselves in the eudaimonic activity, are the reward in themselves. The sensations, which are not always positive, are compensated by the feeling of self-realization, fulfillment of 'mission', and meaningful existence. As has been shown, for example, in the study on goal striving, the key is the person's feeling of whether his goals are perceived as his 'own'

or not his 'own', rather than the kind of emotions the goal evokes [54].

On the contrary, straightforward and total pursuit of easy and immediate pleasures is inevitably affected by the adaptation law and the 'hedonistic paradox' [63]. The very pursuit of enjoyment does not lead to eudaimonia and even takes away from it.

Eudaimonic living brings one more positive result, the prosocial behavior, which is associated with less pressure on the environment [49, 54]. Such people prefer few, but qualitative ties with significant others [50], a sense of relatedness to them [48]. Certain 'moderation' at the social level helps one to concentrate on his potentials and their realization.

Thus health benefits (biological level of the individual), prosocial behavior (social level) and certain hedonistic experiences are useful concomitant results of eudaimonic living, demonstrating its *systemic* influence.

Happiness and Egoism

Before we formulate our model, we need to clarify interrelation of the terms 'egoism', 'happiness' and 'hedonism'.

First of all, 'The majority view ...among biologists and psychologists, is that we are, at heart, purely egoistic...' [4, p. 486]. According to Dawkins, egoism is 'inscribed' into our genes, since it provides strategies for survival and fitness of an individual [8]. So, egoism is not just a 'psychological trait' but a strong biological power. The concept of universal egoism is discussed in the reviews [33] and [61].

Throughout the human history, pleasure and happiness were associated with egoism in its more or less rational forms [44]. Even Aristotle [2] considered that a virtuous man should firstly love and respect oneself. The ideas of Epicure, which gained strong popularity in the epoch of Renaissance, emphasized individual pleasures and enjoyment. At the time, delightful sensations for one's own sake were highly valued. Lorenzo Valla's medieval treatise 'About Delight' is a fine example of the unification and consolidation of hedonism and egoism [47].

According to M. Stirner, pleasure was always the subject of severe rivalry. That is why egoism was a mean to overcome the competitors and be the first [58]. The Russian philosopher I. Ilyin compared egoism with the snake's skin, which was necessary to *protect* the person from external disturbances on his way to

self-realization. 'The absence of egoism, – Ilyin hypothesized, – does not allow a person to resist external pressures (primarily, the egoism of other people), which hampers the development of his inner potential' [18, p.305].

The concept of *rational* egoism as the principal tool for achieving happiness was proclaimed both by the French philosophers of the Enlightenment and by the English Utilitarians. If an egoistic person strived for his own happiness and didn't violate other people's rights, he was considered useful for others, too [41].

In Rand's writings, an individual should attain happiness relying on her own abilities [43]. There are two principal components in this process, the mind and designation. Rand emphasizes that selfishness is the main tool to achieve happiness. The person actualizes her potentials through the productive activity, and the latter is attributed to the sphere of her 'own' interests by rational egoism.

According to modern theories of ethical egoism, every man has predominant obligation towards himself. His reason helps to make the right choice on a journey to happiness. Five out of ten statements on the *Scale of Dispositional Egoism* (the only test we have found in the Russian psychological literature) deal with happiness, hedonistic pleasures, and personal well-being [39]. The present author is convinced that egoism is a strong motivator of personal activity. People, who score high in egoism, are usually more successful and optimistic [39], while the feeling of optimism and success is associated with happiness [11]. The correlation between egoism and optimism clearly shows the protective power of the former on the way to happiness. And vice versa: *unhappy* personality is usually described as lacking egoism and optimism [11]. As J. Robinson in his essay 'Egoism' puts it: 'According to your sympathy, you will take pleasure in your own happiness or in the happiness of other people; but it is always your happiness you seek' [45, p. 1]. Growing materialism and consumerism in the developed countries is based on egoistic pursuit of 'hedonistic' happiness and emaciates the Earth's resources [38]. According to B. Grinde, 'Most humans primarily think of themselves' and 'Any serious political system should take a level of egoism into account' [17, p. 258].

Let us briefly summarize. Hedonism directed towards one's self-delight is a substantial (though not always clearly seen) component of egoism. The term 'hedonistic egoism' exists in modern science, implying the desire to achieve more luxury and keep suffering

off. Ed Diener's SWB theory is a fine reflection of hedonistic egoism, which is based on striving for pleasant experiences and avoiding negative experiences.

Personal egoism cannot and should not be avoided, but people can choose between the 'materialistic' egoism and a more 'rational' egoism. The latter helps one to correlate individual interests with those of other people, as well as to achieve 'higher' human pleasures. The driving motivational force of rational egoism, its intellectual functions and protective powers, may and should be applied in the eudaimonic activity.

Introduction to Person-Oriented Conception of Happiness

We adhere to the eudaimonic approach, according to which 'hedonistic' happiness is a byproduct of self-realization of individual virtues in the appropriate activity. We have developed a synthesizing conception, which includes hedonism as an auxiliary component. Our person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH) is based on the systemic approach, which emphasizes bio-psycho-social unity of a man. The results of our work are summarized in five monographs [25, 26, 28, 29, 32].

In the present article, we introduce the POCH paradigm and demonstrate its integral character, in relation to the eudaimonic and hedonistic conceptions of human life in general, and with respect to the existing approaches to the happiness studies in particular.

Through the content-analysis of scientific literature, discourse and modeling, we have developed a three-level paradigm. It comprises biological, psychological and social levels, synthesizing eudaimonic and hedonistic approaches to happiness and emphasizing the former (Figure 1).

Moving bottom-up, let us describe the main components of POCH. The biological ('body') level of our model (L1) is represented by the concept of Health, which we understand primarily as the absence of essential body 'problems' in the course of psychological self-realization. From our point of view, Health is the most important characteristic of the body level. It supplies a person with physical energy and enables him to strive for optimal life.

Speaking about eudaimonic living, we do not hold to the term '*positive health*' [50]. What can be 'positive' in natural health? It cannot be transformed into 'super

health' anyway. Health is either normal or not. Normal health does not distract a person and creates better conditions for self-realization. To a certain extent, health can also benefit from eudaimonic living. And vice versa: Health may even temporarily deteriorate (consider, e.g., traumas of sportsmen), but this is not the point.

Eudaimonic living should not be confused with healthy life. Must we open 'Eudaimonic clinic' as a new panacea against diseases? One shouldn't rank eudaimonia as the priority in her life if her main purpose is health improvement. For improving health, one should follow healthy (but not eudaimonic) way of living. The early death of Abraham Maslow from the second heart attack is a sad but convincing example. Health should simply be, not necessary 'positive' or 'superb'.

As for the concept of Egoism (EG), the inborn property which is common to humans and other living creatures, we place it at the bottom of psychological Level 2. EG is responsible for self-protection and survival of species. It fulfills two basic instincts, food and sexual, which bring major hedonistic ('lower') pleasures.

Moving further up along L2, EG gradually transforms into Rational Egoism (REG), that includes intellectual, regulatory, and (if necessary) reflexive components. Until being reoriented towards actualization of the Personal Uniqueness (PU), REG is responsible for 'higher', 'human' pleasures and some activity at the social level.

We establish the following major functions of the Rational Egoism in eudaimonic activity.

- 1) Self-development, that is choosing the appropriate material from the external world for PU at the first stage of its maturing;
- 2) Self-realization, that is providing 'protective' and other functions at the second stage of PU realization in the environment;
- 3) Self-regulation and reflection, that is managing PU activity from the higher, 'meaningful' level of the hierarchy.

The internal logic of our theory rests upon the following isomorphism: REG originates from EG the same way as human consciousness and rational mind evolves from the animal world. Let us recall that the Freud's Ego is developing from Id [13]. EG in POCH with its instinct of self-preservation and Freud's 'pleasure principle' serve as a link between the first

body level (L1) and the second psychological level (L2). On the other hand, REG connects L2 with the social L3, being the mediator between PU and external world.

'Deeply inside' Level 2 is placed the Personal Uniqueness (PU), at least for certain number of people. PU, being somewhat analogous to daimon in its classical meaning, synthesizes individual talents and potentials (U) with the personal components (P) that facilitate the application of U in the appropriate activity (assurance, persistence, etc.). The 'P-components' of individual activity belong to the higher sublevel within L2 than the 'U-components'.

Let us formulate the stages of PU development. First of all, a gifted child possesses 'U', but the 'P' components are added (or not!) later, when his personality is developing. The same process takes place in REG formation, when the letter 'R' (Ratio) is being gradually added to inborn EG, giving it a new 'human' quality, i.e., the ability to coordinate personal needs with interests of other people, altruism, etc.

At the first stage of PU formation, REG brings it the necessary 'nutriments' from the outer world (the process of self-development). At the second stage, the developed PU with the help of REG 'enters' the external world, and the process of self-actualization takes place. There exists an opportunity for the third 'transcendental' stage [34] which, in our opinion, can take place under social synergy.

Thus, cohesive interaction of REG and PU brings self-realization and complete human life. Rational Egoism is the best 'partner' for Personal Uniqueness: It accomplishes protective, intellectual and motivating functions in the process of her actualization, being outside the PU activity. Metaphorically, REG can be described as the experienced 'promoter', which protects his very talented but rather 'naïve' pupil (PU) from external threats and superfluous problems in the time of her actualization.

POCH emphasizes the continuity from hedonism to eudaimonia: 'Lower' pleasures, primarily connected with food and sexual instincts (EG); 'higher' pleasures (REG); eudaimonic way of living (REG+PU); the Flow (see later) (PU). Our conclusions concerning REG and EG original responsibilities ('higher' and 'lower' pleasures, correspondingly) as well as their common descent are confirmed by the recent result of neuroscience: '...the brain mechanisms involved in fundamental pleasures (food and sexual pleasures) overlap with those for higher order pleasures (for

example, monetary, artistic, musical, altruistic, and transcendent pleasures)' [23].

The third level (social contacts) is represented by the concept of Moderation [27] that reflects the ideas of Nichomachean Ethics of Aristotle and our comprehension of ambivalence of social world, which influences the person's striving to actualize his potentials and achieve happy life in very different ways.

Under the circumstances, we achieve optimal interaction of all POCH levels. Indeed, L3 positively affects L1 which, in turn, feeds with energy L2. Psychological harmony at L2 has a positive feedback from L1 and L3. We have called this 'Happiness No 1'. It is characteristic for people who have found their PU and realize it via REG.

Pointing out the correlation between the psychological (L2) and the social (L3) levels of POCH, we want to consider a seeming contradiction in the Aristotle's writings, which was described but was not thoroughly analyzed in [50]. For Aristotle, eudaimonia was '...the highest of all goods achieved by human action', '...the best thing in us', '...our true and best nature', while '...happiness ought to be in accordance with highest virtue' [50]. One can easily see the abundance of *superlative* degrees. At the same time, Aristotle repeatedly defines virtues in the categories like '*mean*' and '*intermediate*'. Thus the question arises: How can

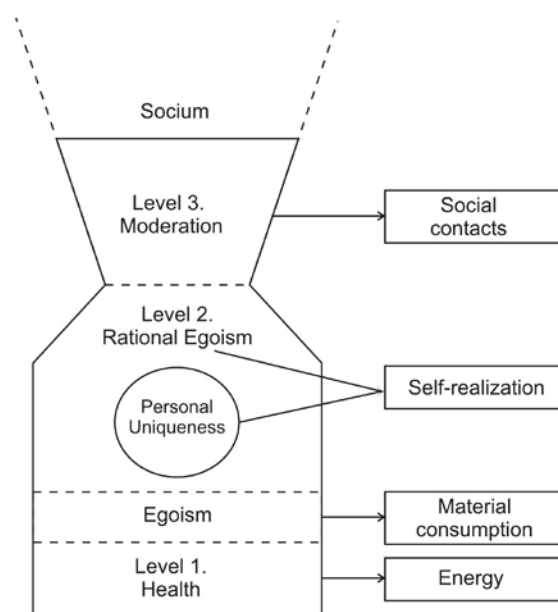


FIGURE 1 POCH. 'HAPPINESS NO 1'

the best and unique qualities of a person be at the same time mean and moderate? Will, for example, one's musical talent become 'stronger' if 'tempered' in the process of self-realization? Did not Aristotle know that creative activity was usually accompanied by the decline in defense mechanisms?

To answer these questions, consider the abstract from the 'Nichomachean Ethics' (taken from Ref. [50]): 'Both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well, but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue.'

So the question arises: what psychological 'agent' within a person decides when, with whom, how, etc. the virtue should be actualized? The non-contradictory explanation comes from our conception: if PU is the person's virtue (or 'daimon'), then REG is his 'practical wisdom' ('phronesis' in Aristotle's terms) that takes appropriate decisions, concerning the conditions of PU fulfillment in the external world and tempers it if necessary. It is the need for cohesive interaction between Rational Egoism and Personal Uniqueness which leads to eudaimonia.

We realize that positive psychology will hardly be at ease with such a negatively loaded term as 'egoism'. On the other hand, REG radically differs from EG and even overtakes it in the process of self-actualization. Can negotiation and submission of the inborn egoism be called truly egoistic? Not likely.

Since PU in POCH is closely related to 'daimon' in its classical meaning, let us discuss the views of the Ancient Greeks on the subject. They considered daimon as a separate, 'ideal' part (golden figurine) inside a person [40]. To get in touch with the one's spirit was the moral imperative of an individual ('know thyself'). Therefore daimon was a kind of *another*, higher, possible self and created a certain heteronomy within a personality.

From this point of view, REG activity towards PU strengthening and actualization is aimed not at '*me*', but at '*the other in me*'. It completely loses its traditional 'egoistic' meaning. As A. N. Slavskaya points out, a person 'does not simply express but rather fulfils himself. This resolves the contradiction between egocentrism and altruism' [56, p. 22].

It is unreasonable to oppose egoism and altruism, since society may benefit from the creative activity of an individual. At the same time, there remains some room for a refined version of the former egoistic experiences. The person who has come in contact with his PU and who actualizes it in his activity gets the feeling of absolute uniqueness and wonderful solitude of his life, where he competes primarily with himself, scores his 'personal' victories, enjoys higher pleasures and is always 'the first' in his eudaimonic journey.

Emphasize that the structure of POCH accounts for both overlap between hedonia and eudaimonia (REG originates from EG) and their divergence (REG should become *reoriented* and take the side of 'eudaimonic' PU, not that of 'hedonic' EG). At L2, REG and PU are ranked higher than EG. This corroborates the abovementioned conclusions, according to which eudaimonic way of living can include or even produce hedonic enjoyment but not the other way around.

One of the most exciting facets of POCH is the following: REG, being an 'offspring' of EG, becomes rather antagonistic towards his 'father' for the sake of PU actualization (a moderate version of Oedipus myth). So, the person faces an existential choice: to stay at the 'hedonic' (EG) level, or to 'climb higher' (REG + PU), discover his true potentials and live meaningful life. The person thus needs to choose between life *for* oneself and life *in the name of* oneself.

We cannot give a detailed explanation of how REG reorients from 'higher' pleasures to PU actualization. Yet, some analogies can be mentioned. Esoteric literature gives a plenty of examples, when a person transcends the borders of everyday life after spiritual crisis. According to Maslow [34] a man moves to self-actualization when both his 'basic' and 'higher' needs are satisfied, usually in the second half of his life. The same regularity is mentioned in Jung's writings [19, 20].

A similar dilemma (between the 'ethical' choosing of one's Self and 'aesthetic' choosing of external life and its pleasures) is put by S. Kierkegaard [22]. For Kierkegaard despair was the main means of transition to Self-choice. In POCH – the PU reinforcing the signals 'heard' by REG.

A Bit of Arithmetic

To quantify our conclusions, let us give one point to the highest possible expression of each level of POCH. We get the following grade for self-actualizing personality:

Level 1=1; Level 2=1; Level 3 (moderation in social contacts) ≈ 0.5 . $1+1+0.5$ makes 2.5 out of 3. We call such result (optimal from our point of view) as 'Happiness No 1', 'eudaimonic happiness'.

If L2 of an individual is not filled in sufficiently (PU is absent or not 'heard'), he is prone to compensate it with L3 widening (extensive but personally meaningless social activity). In this case, we obtain another 'formula of happiness': $L1=1$; $L2\approx 0.5$; $L3=1$. Again it gives 2.5 out of 3. The 'quantity' is the same, but the 'quality' of life is different ('Happiness No 2', **Figure 2**).

There are many other 'ways of living' that can be expressed numerically, but the frame of our article does not allow us to analyze them in details: Most of them get lesser grades and are rather associated with 'unhappiness' or even personality disorders.

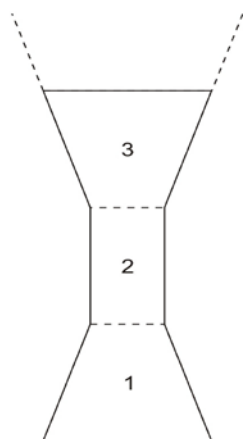


FIGURE 2 HAPPINESS NO 2

Poch: Comparative Analysis and Some Criticism

Since ancient times the concept of 'psyche' was associated with two big and partially overlapping constructs: 'soul' and 'ratio' [57]. Both of them are represented in POCH: Personal Uniqueness and Rational Egoism, correspondingly. This explains theoretical power of our conception, which will be illustrated below.

In Nichomachean Ethics, Aristotle speaks of the activity of the soul according with the rational mind [2]. This is isomorphic to the interaction of PU and REG. We fully agree with the philosopher that such an activity corresponds to 'destination of a righteous man' and contains reward in itself. As has already been

mentioned, eudaimonia can also bring enjoyment which, in turn, facilitates its continuation.

According to Plato, Aristotle's teacher, the soul consists of three parts: the part which is responsible for wishes and 'appetites', the rational part, and spiritual ('passionate') part [42]. In POCH, the three correspond to EG, REG, and PU, accordingly. REG is 'at the reins' of the ancient Greek chariot (Plato's metaphor), while PU and EG are his 'noble' horse and 'stumbling' horse.

Turning briefly to religious metaphors, we can characterize PU as the 'spark of God', while REG corresponds to the guardian angel. Note also similarities of Moderation at L3 with the ideas of Buddhism. Activity of REG in the outer world has common features with one of the basic principles of Judaism (importance of 'righteous deeds'). The emphasis on internal spiritual state (PU) correlates with the ideas of Christianity [16].

Let us now turn to the psychology of personality. The comparison of our model with the most famous theories of the first half of the XXth century (the conceptions of Z. Freud, E. Berne, C. Jung, A. Maslow, C. Rogers, R. Assagioli, partially G. Allport and E. Erikson) uncovered integrative character of POCH. Our model combines the energy of the Freudian unconscious drives (by the way, REG is somewhat similar to psychoanalytic 'strong' Ego), intellectual capabilities of an Adult in the transactional analysis of Eric Berne [5], self-actualization and self-fulfillment tendencies in the humanistic approaches of A. Maslow [34, 35] and C. Rogers [46], inner 'centre' (somewhat analogous to PU) and the movement towards it in the R. Assagioli psychosynthesis [3], principles of individuation and movement towards Self in the Jungian conception [20]. One reveals the proximity of REG to the G. Allport's proprium in the function of 'positive, creative, developing source of human nature' [1]. PU successful actualization is similar to the Eriksonian feeling of identity [12]. *Inter alia*, REG is responsible for self-regulation and strategic construction of the individual lifeline.

POCH (in the case of optimal interaction between its levels) is free of contradictions which are characteristic for some of the previously mentioned theories: the ones between Id and Superego in psychoanalysis, between the willing Child and forbidding Parent in transactional analysis, between humanistic self-actualization tendency and unfriendly external conditions that suppress it (C. Rogers and A. Maslow).

Universality of POCH is somewhat surprising even for the present author. For example, if a person discovers his PU ('daimon') and with the REG help wishes to actualize it in the external world, we talk about *humanistic* character of our model. In this case, the movement is directed *outwards*. If an individual chooses to move in the opposite direction – *inwards*, guided by the slogan 'Know thyself' (Know your PU) we can talk about esoterically, mystically-oriented conceptions. Such an inward movement is vividly represented in C. Jung's theory [19, 20] (knowing Self in the process of individuation) and in R. Assagioli's psychosynthesis [3] (person's tending towards his deeply located centre). In this case, the third level of social contacts in POCH fulfills the role of the 'false façade', the cover under which a real life, though not seen by strangers, proceeds.

A closer look at the second (L2) and third (L3) levels of our conception reveals its partial isomorphism to the Freudian theory of personality. Indeed, EG can be treated as a certain counterpart of Id with its primary drives and the reigning pleasure principle [13, 15]. REG development from EG is analogous to that of Ego from Id. The Moderation principle at the social L3 can be in a sense interpreted as a 'softened' version of Superego. However, in the Freud's personality theory there are no 'personal potentials'. Psychoanalysis interprets any creative activity as a result of sublimation defensive mechanism [13], while the attempts to explain inborn talent are not even undertaken. That is why the use of PU concept and its meaningful fulfillment brings our model closer to humanistic and existentially-oriented theories. It is interesting to point out that the very eudaimonic orientation on the person's self-realization does allow to keep his EG (Id in the psychoanalytic understanding) under control. In this case, REG acts as a mediator between 'inner' and 'outer' world, thus reducing their mutual antagonism [10].

There is one important distinction between the POCH and the Jungian theory of personality. It should be discussed just because A. Maslow adopted several theoretical mechanisms elaborated by Jung into his self-actualization model [59]. According to Jung, the deeply hidden Self (PU in POCH) 'gives birth' to conscious Ego (a bit similar to REG in POCH) which separates from his 'mother'. In the process of person's living his Ego gets far from Self at the same time preserving the initial bond with it [51, p. 261]. Thus Jungian Ego is *homogeneous* to Self. In this case, the process of individuation implies the reverse movement of Ego to Self as well as the strengthening of the latter.

We theorize that since Ego is Self's 'scion' it must not be very difficult for him to go this back way. But if the process of individuation is so homogeneous and 'natural', then why does it occur so rarely among people?

Heteronomy between PU and REG at Level 2 (first of all, due to their *different parentage*) can better explain several empirical facts. REG originates from 'animalistic' EG (like Freudian Ego develops from Id), but not from 'ideal' PU. Still Personal Uniqueness does exist as a '*higher possibility*', as a 'golden figurine' inside a man [40], but its disclosure demands reorientation and subsequent hard work by REG; first of all – turning away from pleasure seeking towards PU actualization.

That is why POCH, admitting the existence of 'ideal' PU, is not as 'pessimistic' about human nature as the psychoanalytic theory. At the same time, our model does not predict an easy and 'natural' way towards PU realization that may seem possible from Jungian writings – mainly because of the radical distinction in the origin of Rational Egoism and Personal Uniqueness. Therefore, actualization of our 'inner treasure' is not predetermined; it becomes rather hypothetical, a question of conscious choice and hard work for a person who 'hears' the call of his PU and feels his own vocation. Such mode of the theoretical discourse gives a better explanation of the fact, that the number of individuals involved in the processes of self-actualization and individuation is relatively small.

POCH occupies the *intermediate* position between the two psychological 'monsters', the theories of Freud and Jung. This is a manifestation of the 'golden mean' that was intuitively observed in the process of the construction of POCH. Most likely we have found the lacking link that can symbolically connect the former two 'rivals' again.

To illustrate REG functions towards PU with an example, let us analyze the abstract from the Jung autobiography [40, p. 3].

'I have had much trouble, getting along with my ideas. There was a daimon in me, and in the end its presence proved decisive. It overpowered me and if I was at times ruthless it was because I was in the grip of the daimon.'

In our framework, this quotation is a fine example of strong PU (daimon), but rather weak REG, that subsequently causes troubles in social contacts at Level 3 of POCH. The decrease of protective measures and psychological defenses at the 'peak' of self-actualization may drive the process out of the

person's control. Perhaps, Jung's 'ruthlessness', being the result of powerful PU actualization and certain lack of Rational Egoism, might have been perceived by his contemporaries as a sign of 'irrational' egoism (EG).

A person with a strong and developed REG can avoid dangers of the environment in the process of PU realization. Within POCH, we can also discuss an important problem of humanistic psychology, which is related but not identical to the one discussed above. Maslow and Rogers explained small percentage (less than one) of self-actualizing people through the 'unfriendly conditions of the environment' [35, 46]. At the same time, both of them believed that *every* person has his inborn potential.

This contradiction between the theoretical constructions and reality becomes even stronger while reading one of the last Maslow's interviews [14]. The scientist discovered, that some of his students 'refused' entering the highest stage of their development, self-actualization, although all lower levels of the pyramid of needs were satisfied. Maslow, by the way, could not give a satisfactory explanation of this fact within theory.

PU-REG dualism enables us to outline some ways of solving this problem. For example, a person with a strongly developed sense of Personal Uniqueness (and even giftedness) not always possesses a proper mechanism (REG) of its realization in the outer world ('non-actualized' talent). Alternatively, an individual may possess neither REG nor PU, but can have strong EG and move further towards unlimited satisfying of his materialistic needs and getting new hedonic pleasures.

Those Maslow's students who had transcended to self-actualization stage, possessed the feeling of 'inner call', their vocation and mission, and were ready for serious work [14]. In other words, having PU and REG, they were prone to realization of the second level of POCH. And those who were incapable of self-actualization, strengthened their third level getting involved into frequent but superficial social contacts (hypersociality in our framework).

The given fact demonstrates the mechanism of interaction between L2 and L3 once more. The person's concentration on self-development and self-realization, demanding the hard work on his potentials, consequently urges him to moderate non-useful social contacts. At the same time the 'door' is always *half-open*, because it is the external world that gives the person an

opportunity to actualize his developed PU [27]. And vice versa: a person experiencing inner emptiness at L2 widens his third, social level as compensation.

Furthermore if we investigate Carl Rogers' process of psychotherapy within the framework of POCH, we can give alternative explanation to its beneficial effects. Therapist's efforts at the initial stages of work with a client, connected with the unconditional understanding and acceptance of the latter, can be interpreted as REG activity, the function of which the therapist fulfills by himself. Such efforts help to gradually strengthen the client's PU at the first stage of its development. If the therapy is effective, there comes the time for the second stage – PU entering the external word – firstly, into the space of interaction between the therapist and the client. Such space is broadening by degrees while the client's PU is getting more and more solid.

In modern theories, the PU-REG connection easily incorporates most of the components concerning eudaimonic living: autonomy (Ryan and Deci; Ryff and Singer; Sheldon and Elliot); competence (Ryan and Deci) and mastery (Ryff and Singer); life purpose (Ryff and Singer) and self-concordant goals (Sheldon and Elliot); personal growth and self-acceptance (Ryff and Singer). Every personal trait, mentioned above, can be included either into REG concept (for example autonomy, life purpose, self-acceptance etc.) or into PU. If a trait is demonstrated 'inside' the person's specific activity, it should be related with PU; if 'outside' – with REG.

'Relatedness' (Ryan and Deci) and 'positive relatedness' (Ryff and Singer), the rest eudaimonic components, belong to Level 3 within POCH framework, putting a special emphasis on quality, not quantity of interactions [48]. These concepts do not contradict an overall moderation in 'broad' social contacts and at the same time evoke the idea of social synergy, introduced by Ruth Benedict, one of Maslow's teachers [34].

In our comprehension the term 'social synergy' nowadays can be applied in a more narrow sense – describing the community of people, which promote eudaimonic way of living within the 'complementarity of excellences' principle [40]. Thus, social interactions of a eudaimonic person can be formulated in such a way: moderate the quantity, 'synergize' the quality. In Maslow's writings one can find references concerning the community of people (mostly psychologists) who pursue self-actualization.

POCH does not contradict to Waterman's conception of eudaimonic activity. We want just to add that the concept of 'personal expressiveness' (PE) can hardly give the full coverage of eudaimonic way of living. That is why it is supplemented with the terms 'self-realization', 'engagement' and 'self-development' in our ESM experiments [32]. We do not intend to encroach upon the abovementioned theories, which have proved their validity; we simply show some concomitant opportunities the new systemic paradigm offers.

We would also like to invoke POCH to discuss a very important 'eudaimonic' theme, the flow [7]. We understand the flow as unimpeded PU actualization (almost without REG) in appropriate activity. That is why one can fully concentrate on the process and use his psychic energy harmoniously [7, p. 176].

In explanatory purposes, let us add 'some POCH' into the flow and describe the dynamics. When a person is inside the flow without anything hampering his PU, he acts in the most effective way. Then, imagine that a minor 'irritator' distracts the actor's attention. For example, some strangers appear near the rock during the climber's training. They watch his performance and loudly talk about it. To keep his activity at the proper level and under control, the climber's REG comes into play. Most probably, the sense of flow will diminish to some extent. The noisier are the visitors, the bigger is REG, and the weaker is the flow. If the 'audience' begins to behave aggressively (like throwing stones at the climber) his flow and PU disappear, while 'intelligent' REG is replaced by more 'brutal' EG.

Since rock climbing and playing chess give good examples of the flow experience, some climbers and chess players were thoroughly interviewed by M. Csikszentmihalyi. Being the chess master in the past and an amateur rock climber at present, the present author wants to point out a small contradiction in the Csikszentmihalyi description of the flow [7], which by no means is related to the essence of the topic. 'Concentration on the task' (pp. 176, 178), 'focus of attention' (p.180) and 'high level of applied skills' (p.181) can hardly coexist with 'loss of self-consciousness' (p.178) when 'everything goes automatically, without thinking' (p.183). The latter two are closer to a *trance* state. Most probably, there exist different stages of the flow or even different kinds of the flow, in more or less strenuous activities.

Csikszentmihalyi's characteristic of transcendent

personality is a fine confirmation of REG-PU coexistence and interaction: 'It is the T-person who combines harmoniously these opposite tendencies: he or she is original yet systematic, independent yet responsible, bold yet disciplined, intuitive yet rational ... It is easy to be at one or the other pole of these pairs, and much more difficult to be at both ends at once. Yet only when the apparent antinomy of these two processes is resolved can a self fully participate in the flow of evolution.' (p. 238).

The protective function that REG implements towards PU during its actualization in the outer world helps to withstand The Hostile-World Scenario [55]. The term 'HWS' does not seem too precise: external world cannot be 'hostile' or 'friendly': It is 'indifferent' to us. Thinking about the world as 'hostile' implies a paranoid attitude towards the environment. We propose to change the order of words and talk about The World's Hostile Scenario (WHS) keeping in mind that a plenty of 'world's scenarios' is possible.

The concept of the right meaningful living to one's true self is the core of eudaimonia. Its turning down may lead to erosion and distortion of the subject matter. One of the recent studies [60] actually associates eudaimonia with the 'complexity of the task', 'goal striving', 'struggle and challenge' (p. 12). On the other hand, there is no mentioning of the personality inner 'agreement' with the activity he is offered. As David Norton states, 'What the eudaemonist demands to know first is whether the gratified desire is right or wrong desire. It signals that the present activity of the individual is in harmony with the daimon that is his true self' [40, p. 5]. 'Interest' or 'curiosity' [60, p. 4] can hardly serve as reliable criteria of eudaimonia, because these states are easily aroused by many different stimuli, take 'bright' advertising as an example. Therefore, students solving sudoku puzzles are hardly engaged in a true eudaimonic activity.

Within the present paper, we can cover only a small part of the problems we are interested in. Let us show a possible solution of only one 'enigma' existing in the modern psychology, 'the egoist's dilemma', which deals with a balance between personal egoism and social good [38]. In essence, the problem can be reduced to the following: there is a village and a common meadow nearby. The peasants have cows that feed on the meadow. For his own benefit, each peasant wishes to have as many cows as possible. Then, however, the grass on the meadow will be eaten soon and the cows will starve to death.

POCH helps to easily solve the problem. If every peasant knows his PU (that is *unique* for each person) then only few of them (if any) may wish to deal with cows. The majority will prefer to actualize themselves in other, more suitable activities. The peasants, whose PU lies in the sphere of agriculture, will easily figure out the optimal herd [29, 30]. That is it, the modern solution of 'the egoist's dilemma' by means of *Rational Egoism*! Not only for peasants, but for their cows, too.

POCH can help a lot in the upbringing of gifted children. It can help to *uncover* their Personal Uniqueness and *form* components of their Rational Egoism for their future life and activity [6]. In this case, the contradiction between conditional (for REG formation) and unconditional (for PU uncovering) positive approaches is resolved.

We also admit a possibility of spontaneous PU 'outburst', usually in middle-aged persons between 40 and 50 years [21]. But why should one wait till that? Is not it better to form one's REG, so that PU could be consequently actualized without any 'outbursts'?

If necessary, POCH can be cast into the abstract form: Something 'Brute' (EG) inside a person gives birth to something 'Rational' (REG) which begins to search for something 'Ideal' (PU) and, having discovered the sought, actualizes it in the outer world putting 'Brute' under control. Then the 'happiness happens'.

In principle, POCH can be viewed as a personality theory. We prefer to apply it to the happiness studies, since egoism is its important component and selfishness, in its various forms, has strong connections with the pursuit of happiness.

We are convinced that POCH offers wide opportunities in the sphere of theoretical psychology and happiness studies. The power of POCH stems from its systemic nature and many centuries of debates and explorations of its main components. First of all, this refers to the concepts of 'daimon' (Personal Uniqueness), 'the golden mean' (Moderation) and Rational Egoism. According to N. Smith [57], POCH can be referred to as a 'metatheory', which consists of 'super constructs'.

The present article is confined to the *theoretical* aspects of our paradigm. Below we briefly enumerate the *practical* techniques applied in our daily work, which will be thoroughly described in the future papers.

(i) ZULUREG Inquiry, which is designed to diagnose POCH components and their relationship [31].

(ii) Eudaimonic Training (the author's workshop), which gives the opportunity to explore one's Personal Uniqueness and move towards eudaimonic way of living [32].

(iii) ESM technique, which has been used to estimate four eudaimonic and one hedonic component among six testees who scored the highest grades on the PU scale of ZULUREG. The experiment started in October 2011 and matured in December 2011.

(iv) Neurobiological investigations and psychotherapeutic interventions on the basis of POCH.

Conclusions

Our person-oriented conception of happiness (POCH) combines eudaimonic and hedonic traditions within a new systemic paradigm. Eudaimonia (REG+PU) is placed higher in the hierarchy of psychological Level 2, thus 'including' hedonia in itself. This construction reflects the recent experimental data on the correlation between the two objects. REG originates from EG. This explains a partial overlap between eudaimonia and hedonia, while REG orientation towards PU actualization takes REG away from EG, creating certain divergence between them.

In the sphere of fundamental psychology, POCH integrates several personality theories of the beginning-mid twentieth century. At the same time, POCH can serve as a systemic 'prototype' for the future theoretical and experimental investigations. We believe that POCH is a fine example of the integrative approach, the intermarriage of different perspectives around the concept of happiness, in which ancient philosophy gets its full breathing within frames of modern psychology.

REFERENCES

- [1] G.W. Allport, *The Person in Psychology*, Beacon Press, Boston (1968).
- [2] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Oxford, New York, (2002).
- [3] R. Assagioli, *Psychosynthesis, Psychotherapy*, Moscow (2008).
- [4] C.D. Batson et al.; in C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (eds), *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, Oxford University Press (2001), p.485-498.
- [5] E. Berne, *Games People Play*, Eksmo, Moscow (2008).

- [6] S. L. Bratchenko and M. R. Mironova, in A. A. Krylov and L. A. Korostyleva (eds), *Psychological Problems of Self-realization*, Saint-Petersburg (1997), p. 38-46.
- [7] M. Csikszentmihalyi, *The Evolving Self*, Harper Perennial, New York (1993).
- [8] R. Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, Mir, Moscow (1993).
- [9] E.L. Deci and R.M. Ryan, *Journal of Happiness Studies*, No 9 (2008).
- [10] N.V. Druzhinin, *Variants of Life*, Piter, Saint-Petersburg, (2010).
- [11] I.A. Dzhydaryan, *Psychological Journal*, Vol. 21, No 2, (2000).
- [12] E. Erikson, *Identity, Youth and Crisis*, Norton, New York (1968).
- [13] Z. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Merani, Tbilisi (1991).
- [14] W.B. Frick, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol. 40, No 2 (2000).
- [15] E. Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, Harper&Row, New York (1964).
- [16] R.M. Granovskaya, *The Psychology of Faith*, 2nd ed., Piter, Saint-Petersburg (2010).
- [17] B. Grinde, *Darwinian Happiness: Evolution as a Guide for Living and Understanding Human Behavior*, The Darwin Press, Princeton, NJ (2004).
- [18] I.A. Ilyin, *Bolshevism as Temptation and Death*, Russkaya Kniga, Moscow (1994).
- [19] C.G. Jung, *The collected works of C.G. Jung* (Vol.8), Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ (1931/1969).
- [20] C.G. Jung, *Grundwerk*, AST, Moscow (2009).
- [21] M.A. Kholodnaya, *The Psychology of Intelligence*, Piter, Saint-Petersburg (2002).
- [22] S. Kierkegaard, *The Unhappiest*, BBI, Moscow (2002).
- [23] M.L. Kringelbach, K.C. Berridge, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol.13, No 11 (2009).
- [24] M.L. Kringelbach, K.C. Berridge, *The functional neuroanatomy of pleasure and happiness* (2010), electronic resource www.discoverymedicine.com.
- [25] L.Z. Levit, *Happiness of the Mind*, Varaksin, Minsk (2008).
- [26] L.Z. Levi, *Happiness of the Mind* (2nd ed.), Varaksin, Minsk, (2009a).
- [27] L.Z. Levit, *Psychotherapy & Clinical Psychology*, No 2, p. 42 (2009b).
- [28] L.Z. Levit, *Happiness of the Mind-3* (3rd ed.), Para la Oro, Minsk (2010).
- [29] L.Z. Levit, *The Formula of Happiness*, Varaksin, Minsk (2011a).
- [30] L.Z. Levit, in S. I. Kudinov (ed), *Actual Problems of Ethnic and Social Psychology*, RUDN, Moscow (2011b).
- [31] L.Z. Levit, *ZULUREG Inquiry*, Minsk (2011c).
- [32] L.Z. Levit, *Person-Oriented Conception of Happiness: Life in the Name of Oneself*, Varaksin, Minsk (2011d).
- [33] J.J. Mansbridge, (Ed.), *Beyond Self-Interest*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago (1990).
- [34] A.H. Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, Viking Press, New York (1971).
- [35] A.H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (3rd ed), Harper & Row, New York (1987).
- [36] E.A. McMahan, D. Estes, *Journal of Happiness Studies*, No 12 (2011).
- [37] D. Myers, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, Quill, New York (2002).
- [38] D. Myers, *Social Psychology* (7th ed.), Piter, Saint-Petersburg (2009).
- [39] K. Muzdybaev, *Psychological Journal*, Vol. 21, No 2, (2000).
- [40] D.L. Norton, *Personal Destinies*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey (1976).
- [41] E. F. Petrov, *Egoism*, Nauka, Moscow (1969).
- [42] Plato, *Republic*, MGIMO-University, Moscow (2009).
- [43] A. Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, Alpina Publishers, Moscow (2011).
- [44] *Rational Egoism Theory*, Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, Polradis, Moscow (1996).
- [45] J.B. Robinson, *Egoism*, Printer-friendly version (2005).
- [46] C.R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist View on Psychotherapy*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston (1961).
- [47] I.A. Rudzite, *Bulletin of Leningrad State University*, No 1 (2006).
- [48] R.M. Ryan, E.L. Deci, *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 52 (2001).
- [49] R.M. Ryan, V. Huta, E.L. Deci, *Journal of Happiness Studies*, No 9 (2008).

- [50] C.D. Ryff, B.H. Singer, *Journal of Happiness Studies* No 9 (2006).
- [51] A. Samuels, B. Shorter, A. Plaut, *A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis*, ABC-Classics, Saint-Petersburg (2009).
- [52] B. Schwarz, *The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less*, Dobraya Kniga, Moscow (2005).
- [53] M.E.P. Seligman, *New Positive Psychology*, Sophia, Kiev (2006).
- [54] K. M. Sheldon, A.J. Elliot, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 76, No 3 (1999).
- [55] D. Shmotkin, *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 9. No 4 (2005).
- [56] A.N. Slavskaya, *Psychological Journal (Moscow)*, Vol. 20, No 6 (1999).
- [57] N. Smith, *Current Systems in Psychology*, Wadsworth, Thomson Learning (2001).
- [58] M. Stirner, *The One and His Property*, ABC, Moscow (2001).
- [59] E.E. Vakhromov, *Psychological Conceptions of Person's Development: The Theory of Self-actualization*, International Pedagogical Academy, Moscow (2001).
- [60] J.Vitterso et al., *Social Indicators Research*, No 95 (2010).
- [61] M.A. Wallach, L. Wallach, *Psychology's Sanction for Selfishness: The Error of Egoism in Theory and Therapy*, Freeman, San Francisco (1983).
- [62] A.S. Waterman, S.J. Schwartz, R. Conti, *Journal of Happiness Studies*, No 9 (2008).
- [63] I.D. Yalom, *Existential Psychotherapy*, Class, Moscow (2004).